

Royston
Urban District Council.



REPORT
FOR THE YEAR 1903,

— BY —

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MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.



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ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

REPORT.

I beg leave to communicate to the Royston Urban District Council my Annual Report for the year 1903 on “the conditions affecting the health in the District and . . . the means for improving those conditions,” and in addressing myself to this task I have to point out to the Council that by the “Memorandum as to the Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health,” issued by the Local Government Board, October, 1903, I am directed to discuss prescribed subjects in definite order, and give information which may seem superfluous to the Council. The following extract from the Memorandum will make clear the intention of the Local Government Board :—

- “As subjects concerning which the Board desire to obtain, through Annual Reports of the Medical Officer of Health not only definite general information, but record also of particular changes of condition that may have occurred incidentally or by action of the Local Authority, the following deserve especially to be borne in mind :
- “Physical features and general character of the District.
- “House accommodation, especially of the working classes ; its adequacy and fitness for habitation. Sufficiency of open space about houses, and cleanliness of surroundings. Supervision over erection of new houses.
- “Sewerage and Drainage : its sufficiency in all parts of the District. Condition of sewers and house drains. Method or methods of disposal of sewage. Localities where improvements are needed.
- “Excremental disposal : System in vogue ; defects, if any.
- “Removal and disposal of house refuse—whether by public scavenger or occupiers ; frequency and method.
- “Water Supply of the District or its several parts : its source (from public service or otherwise), nature (river water, well water, upland water, etc.), sufficiency, wholesomeness, and freedom (by special treatment or otherwise) from risks of pollution.

- “ Places over which the Council have supervision, *e.g.*, lodging-houses, slaughter-houses, bake-houses, dairies, cowsheds and milkshops, factories and workshops, and offensive trades.
- “ Nuisances : Proceedings for their abatement—any remaining unabated.
- “ Methods of dealing with infectious diseases : Notification ; isolation hospital accommodation and its sufficiency ; disinfection.
- “ With regard to such points it should be remembered that these reports are for the information of the Board and of the County Council as well as for the Council of the District, and that a statement of the local circumstances and a history of local sanitary questions, which may seem superfluous for the latter, may often be needed by the former bodies.”

VITAL STATISTICS.

Vital Statistics
Population,
etc.

In view of the information contained in the Summary Tables of the Census of England and Wales (1901) which were published after the issue of my report for the year 1902, I have been obliged to re-estimate the population of the district and re-calculate the vital statistics for each year. I estimate the population of the district to the middle of the year 1903 at 3564 and use this as the basis for calculation of Vital Statistics.

Deaths and
death-rate.

The total number of deaths registered within the District is 55, which, as usual, must be corrected by a subtraction of deaths in Public Institutions in the District of persons not belonging to it, *viz.*: 14, which occurred in the Union Workhouse, and 6 which occurred in the Cottage Hospital, and by an addition of 1 belonging to the District which occurred in the Three Counties' Asylum, and 1 which occurred in the Addenbroke's Hospital, respectively situate outside the District, making a corrected total of 42 (25 males, and 17 females) equal to a death-rate from all causes and at all ages of 11·7 per thousand living per annum, which is the lowest rate recorded since the constitution of the district. The rate for the previous year was 13·2. The death-rate for England and Wales for the year 1903 is given as 15·4 in the summary of the Registrar-General contained in the appendix to his report for the last quarter of the year, and is the lowest rate on record.

The deaths due to the chief epidemic diseases during the year have been only one from Scarlet Fever and one from Diphtheria, equal to a death-rate from these diseases of 0·56 per thousand living per annum.

Epidemic
Mortality.

Influenza has caused no deaths.

Influenza.

The total number of births registered is 70 (40 males and 30 females) equal to a birth-rate of 19·6 per thousand living per annum. The rate for the previous year was 21·4. The birth-rate in England and Wales for the year 1903 is given as 28·4, which is 0·2 per 1,000 lower than the rate in 1902 and lower than the rate in any year on record.

Births and
Birth-rate.

Infantile mortality, as represented by the ratio of deaths of children under one year age to 1,000 registered births is 128. The rate for the previous year was 92.

Infantile
Mortality.

Registration Sub-District.	Registered Deaths belonging	Adden-brooke's Hospital.	Cottage Hospital.	Sharo of Work-house.	Three Counties Asylum.	Corrected Total.	Death-rate.
Royston	35	1	1	4	1	42	11·7

The number of deaths from Phthisis among persons belonging to the District is 4, and the death-rate is 1·12 per thousand.

Phthisis and
Cancer.

The number of deaths from Cancer among persons belonging to the District is 5, and the death-rate is 1·40 per thousand.

The deaths and death-rate from Phthisis and Cancer in the District among persons belonging thereto for the previous six years are set out in the following table :

	PHTHISIS.			CANCER.		
	DEATHS.		DEATH-RATE.	DEATHS.		DEATH-RATE.
1897 ...	3	...	0·87	3	...	0·87
1898 ...	5	...	1·44	5	...	1·44
1899 ...	9	...	2·58	3	...	0·86
1900 ...	5	...	1·43	7	...	2·00
1901 ...	2	...	0·56	7	...	1·99
1902 ...	3	...	0·84	5	...	1·41
Average for years 1897—1902	4·5		1·29	5·0		1·43

DISEASE INCIDENCE.

Disease of an infectious character has been much

Disease
Incidence.

more prevalent than during the previous year; forty-one cases of Scarlet Fever, six cases of Diphtheria, three cases of Typhoid Fever, and five cases of Erysipelas having been notified.

Small Pox. No case of Small Pox has occurred in the District during the year.

Scarlet Fever. With regard to Scarlet Fever, forty-one cases (one fatal) in twenty-eight households have been notified. The disease was continuously present from January 23 till June 4, during which period thirty cases in twenty households were notified. The source of infection in the first case could not be satisfactorily accounted for, but social intercourse and school assemblage would appear to have been potent influences in maintaining the incidence of this disease. With regard to one of the cases there was reason to think that it was imported, but investigation tended to negative this supposition. In several instances social intercourse could be distinctly traced as a source of infection. No further cases occurred till September when four cases in three households were notified. No connection could be traced between this group and those occurring during the early part of the year. During November and December seven cases in five households were notified. Some of these cases were unknown until discovered by the Medical Officer of Health who suggested medical attendance and the removal of the cases to the Infectious Diseases Hospital.

Diphtheria. Diphtheria has not been epidemic, but six sporadic cases (one fatal) in six households occurred between March 6 and August 10. Four of these could not be traced to any antecedent cases, but in two instances the disease was possibly introduced from without the district, viz.: one by a nurse from a Diphtheria Hospital, and the other from New Cross.

Typhoid Fever Three cases of Typhoid Fever in three households have been notified, one in February, one in March, and one in September. The former and the latter as indicated by blood test and other circumstances were regarded as of doubtful character. The one in March might possibly have been imported from without the district.

A case of Anthrax in a pig at Mill Road was reported to me on April 16, by the Veterinary Inspector.

The usual precautions were taken with regard to it.

METHODS OF DEALING WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Isolation
Hospital,
etc.

The methods of dealing with Infectious Diseases are by notification followed by enquiry by the Medical Officer of Health, Inspector of Nuisances, or by both, according to the importance of the cases. The Isolation Hospital for the use of this District and the Ashwell and Melbourn Rural Districts was opened for the reception of patients on April 1, after which date sixteen cases of Scarlet Fever and two cases of Diphtheria were admitted from the Urban District of Royston. Where cases were not removed advice was given as to the safe isolation at home. The School Authorities have been informed of the households in which Infectious Diseases have occurred with a request to exclude all the members until they are free from infection.

In consequence of the epidemic of Scarlet Fever the schools were closed for several weeks and the school-premises disinfected with the formalin spray machine which has been purchased during the year, and places of assemblage for Sunday Schools were also disinfected by means of formalin vapour.

In threatened outbreaks of Diphtheria prophylactic injections of Antitoxin are recommended for the protection of all persons who are known to have been exposed to the chances of infection, and bacterial examination of the mucous passages of all known "Contacts" is also recommended for the discovery of any unsuspected case of the disease.

At the conclusion of a case the infected rooms and articles contained therein are disinfected by aerial disinfectants or by the formalin spray, and the bedding, etc., disinfected at the steam disinfecting oven at the Isolation Hospital. I should here like to remark that the disinfecting oven is not of sufficient dimensions for the adequate disinfection of bedding. In the fatal case of Scarlet Fever, which was of a very severe type, the bedding was destroyed and compensation given.

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT.

The town of Royston is situate in the valley of the

Physical
Features.

Cam on a gentle slope at the base of the chalk hills. The centre of the town is of some antiquity, but the town is being extended by the erection of modern buildings along the outskirts, especially the Melbourn and Kneesworth Roads. Its slightly elevated position on the porous chalks renders it generally dry. An ancient watercourse runs through the town and loses itself in the direction of Kneesworth in what would really be a small lake were it not for the extreme porosity of the soil which converts it into somewhat of a morass. This watercourse has been utilised as a surface water drain.

HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

House
Accommoda-
tion.

The house accommodation for the artisan class is scarcely adequate for the needs of the District, and during May a special inspection was made into the circumstances of several houses in the District which were considered to be in a dilapidated or unhealthy condition and six of these were made the subject of a special report to the Council with the result that one house has been repaired by the owner without notice from the Council. Notice was served on the owner of one house in two Tenements, and repairs have been carried out to the satisfaction of the Surveyor. In another instance one of two cottages has been re-thatched, and both are shortly to be put in a further state of repair by the present owner. With regard to the remainder no repairs have as yet been done.

Two cottages have been erected in Rock Road during the year. These are at present drained into cesspools.

A nuisance from overcrowding at Silver Hill which had been previously abated recurred by the return of the members of the family who had previously been removed, and has been abated again by a second removal.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

Sewerage and
Drainage.

The sewerage system of the town is dual, consisting of excremental and surface water systems. The sewers are ventilated by shafts at convenient spots along the line of streets. The general condition of the sewers is good.

The sewerage system has been extended along

Green Street, Melbourn Road and London Road during the year, and 7 houses in Green Street, 10 houses in Melbourn Road, and 3 houses in London Road have been connected to the sewer with the consequent abolition of a certain number of cesspools.

The sewage is at present disposed of on a sewage farm which has been in use for a considerable number of years. A new scheme of sewage disposal by broad irrigation and intermittent downward filtration has been submitted to and approved of by the Local Government Board; with a view to carrying this scheme into effect a piece of land containing about sixteen acres has been acquired. When the existing tenancy of the land has been determined this area will be prepared for the purpose of sewage disposal.

EXCREMENT DISPOSAL.

Water closets are in general use in the District and there are very few other forms of excrement disposal.

Excrement
Disposal.

REMOVAL AND DISPOSAL OF HOUSE REFUSE.

There is a regular system of scavengering under the supervision of the Surveyor.

Removal of
House refuse.

WATER SUPPLY.

The whole of the District is supplied with water from the chalk by the Royston Water Company, Limited.

Water Supply.

PLACES OVER WHICH THE COUNCIL HAVE SUPERVISION.

Inspections.

The slaughter-houses, dairies, cow-sheds, and milk-shops have been regularly inspected and cleansing and lime-washing ordered where necessary and duly carried out.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

Factories and
Workshops.

The Factory and Workshops Act 1901 which came into force on January 1st, 1902 imposes several new and important powers and duties on the District Council.

FACTORIES:—There are no factories in the district where more than forty persons are employed.

WORKSHOPS:—The workshops in the district are as follows:—Bakehouses 5, Bootmakers 3, Bicycle Makers 3,

Blacksmiths 3, Basket Makers 2, Builders 3, Carpenters 2, Coach Builders 2, Dressmakers 6, Masons 2, Plumbers 3, Photographer 1, Saddlers 3, Tailors 4, Watchmakers 3, Wheelwright 1. Total 46.

The workshops mentioned above have been inspected with regard to the points mentioned in the Memorandum as to Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health dated October, 1903, and found to be kept in a satisfactory condition.

The five bakehouses mentioned above have been periodically inspected during the year. There is no underground bakehouse in the district.

REGISTER:—A register of the workshops in the district has been compiled.

Nuisances.

NUISANCES.

At the Mount a nuisance caused by a defective drain and dilapidated paving to yard has been abated by the provision of a new drain and cementing the surface of the yard.

In consequence of a complaint of smells in a house at Market Place an examination of the premises was made, when it was discovered that sewer gas was escaping into the house from a drain belonging to the premises owing to defects in chamber next wall of house. The nuisance has been abated by repairing the brickwork next wall of house and facing the chamber with cement.

In consequence of a case of Diphtheria at Back Street an examination of the drain was made when it was found that the joints were made of mortar and were defective and that there was no ventilating shaft. The joints have been caulked with cement and a ventilating shaft has been provided.

Complaints having been received of smells from ventilator to house drain in Melbourn Street, a ventilating shaft has been fixed at the top end of drain.

In view of the discovery of these defects I think it is desirable that a systematic examination by smoke test should be made of the drains in selected areas of the town and for this purpose it will be necessary to obtain some special apparatus.

A number of minor nuisances arising from blocked drains, accumulations of manure, etc., have been abated on notice from the Inspector of Nuisances.

ADOPTIVE ACTS.

The Adoptive Acts in operation in the District are the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889; the Infectious Disease (Prevention) Act, 1890; and Part III of Public Health Acts (Amendment) Act 1890.

Adoptive
Acts.

All the above remarks together with the Tables of Statistics required by the Local Government Board, and the Inspector's Record of Work, I respectfully submit to the Urban District Council.

Statistical
Tables.

BUSHELL ANNINGSON.

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF ROYSTON.

Summary of Work done through the Sanitary Inspector in the
URBAN SANITARY DISTRICT OF ROYSTON during the year
ending December 31st, 1903.

Complaints received	...	...	...	...	12
Nuisances detected without complaint	...	...	...	...	21
Nuisances abated	...	...	...	...	32
Notices served	...	...	...	...	2
Summonses taken out	...	...	...	...	0
Convictions	...	...	...	...	0
Cottages inspected	...	...	...	...	250
Lodging-houses inspected	...	...	...	...	0
Slaughter-house inspected	...	...	...	...	4
Bakehouses inspected	...	...	...	...	5
Dairies and Milk Shops inspected	...	...	...	...	6
Cowsheds inspected	...	...	...	...	7
Workshops inspected	...	...	...	...	48
Filthy houses cleansed, sec. 46 Public Health Act, 1875	...	...	...	...	0
Houses disinfected	...	...	...	...	27
Overcrowding abated	...	...	...	...	1
Houses placed in habitable repair	...	...	...	...	9
Houses closed	...	...	...	...	0
Houses erected or re-built for which Water "Certificates" were applied	...	...	...	...	0
"Certificates" granted	...	...	...	...	0
„ deferred	...	...	...	...	0
Wells sunk or improved supplies of water afforded	...	...	...	...	0
Wells cleansed or repaired	...	...	...	...	0
Wells closed	...	...	...	...	0
Houses connected with sewers	...	...	...	...	34
Houses connected with water mains	...	...	...	...	19
Earth, pail, or improved Privies constructed or altered	...	...	...	...	0
Privies and W.C.'s repaired or supplied with water...	...	...	...	...	1
Cisterns cleansed, repaired, or covered	...	...	...	...	0
Animals improperly kept removed	...	...	...	...	2
Samples of water taken for Analysis	...	...	...	...	0
Compensation paid for destruction of infected bedding	£2	6	0	...	0
Seizure of unsound Meat, etc.	...	...	...	...	0
Travellers' Vans visited	...	...	...	...	42

W. J. WEBB,

Inspector of Nuisances.

TABLE I.

For the Urban District of Royston.

Table showing Vital Statistics for the year 1903 and the antecedent six years.

YEAR.	Population estimated to the middle of the year.	BIRTHS.		Total Deaths registered in the District.				Total Deaths in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of non-residents registered in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Residents registered in Public Institutions beyond the District.	NETT DEATHS AT ALL AGES BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.	
				UNDER ONE YEAR.		AT ALL AGES.					Number.	* Rate.
		Number.	* Rate.	Number.	Rate per 1,000 Births registered.	Number.	* Rate.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
†1897	3437	89	25·8	6	67	57	16·5	13	11	1	44	12·8
1898	3458	71	20·5	11	155	58	16·7	6	3	1	56	16·1
1899	3478	88	25·3	11	125	79	22·4	18	19	2	62	17·8
1900	3497	63	18·0	3	47	59	16·8	20	17	2	44	12·5
1901	3517	90	25·5	7	77	57	16·2	16	14	1	44	12·5
1902	3543	76	21·4	7	92	62	17·4	16	16	1	47	13·2
Averages for years 1897-1902	3488	79	22·6	7	88	62	17·7	15	14	1	49	14·0
1903	3561	70	19·6	9	128	55	15·4	20	15	2	42	11·7

* Rates calculated per 1,000 of population.

† District constituted in this year.

NOTE.—The deaths included in Column 7 of this table are the whole of those registered during the year as having actually occurred within the district or division. The deaths included in Column 12 are the number in Column 7, corrected by the subtraction of the number in Column 10 and the addition of the number in column 11.

By the term "Non-resident" is meant persons brought into the district on account of sickness or infirmity and dying in public institutions there; and by the term "Residents" is meant persons who have been taken out of the district on account of sickness or infirmity and have died in public institutions elsewhere.

The Public Institutions taken into account for the purpose of this and Table IV. are the Union Workhouse, and the Cottage Hospital, Royston; Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, and the Three Counties Asylum, near. Hitchin.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water).. .. 1,003

Total population at all ages 3517

Number of inhabited houses 805

Average number of persons per house 4·3

} At Census
of 1901.

TABLE II.

Omitted by direction of the Local Government Board as
needless for small and undivided districts.

TABLE III.

The Urban District of Royston.

Cases of Infectious Diseases notified during the Year 1903.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.							No. of cases removed to Hospital.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.						
		Under 1.	1 to 5	5 to 15	15 to 25	25 to 65	65 and upw'ds	
Smallpox .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria	6	..	..	4	1	1	..	2
Membranous Croup	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas	5	..	1	..	..	4	..	..
Scarlet Fever ..	41	..	13	20	5	3	..	16
Typhus Fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteric Fever ..	3	..	..	..	1	2	..	..
Relapsing Fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Continued Fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Fever ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Varicella .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
TOTALS	55	..	14	24	7	10	..	18

NOTE—The Isolation Hospital for the use of this District and the Ashwell,
and Melbourn Rural Districts is situate in Garden Walk Royston.

TABLE IV.

The Urban District of Royston.

Causes of Death at several age periods during the Year 1903.

CAUSES OF DEATH.				DEATHS in or belonging to the whole District at subjoined Ages.								TOTAL DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN THE DISTRICT.
				12 All Ages.	Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.		
1				2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Smallpox	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Measles	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..
Whooping Cough		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diphtheria and Membranous Croup				1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Croup	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fever..	{	Typhus	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
		Enteric	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
		Other continued	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Epidemic Influenza	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cholera..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Plague	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diarrhœa.	...	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Enteritis.	...	..	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Puerperal Fever..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Erysipelas	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other septic diseases	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	1
Phthisis	..	..	..	4	1	1	..	..	2	..	..
Other tubercular diseases..		..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Cancer, malignant disease	..	..	..	5	..	..	..	..	4	1	..
Bronchitis	..	..	..	8	..	..	..	..	3	5	..
Pneumonia	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	1	..	..	..
Pleurisy	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Other diseases of Respiratory organs.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Alcoholism. Cirrhosis of Liver	..	..	..	2	..	..	..	..	1	1	1
Venereal diseases	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Premature birth	..	..	..	4	4	..	..	..	..	..	..
Diseases & accidents of Parturition				1	1	..	..	..	..	..	..
Heart diseases	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	1	3
Accidents	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	2
Suicides	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Murders	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
All other causes	..	..	..	11	1	1	..	..	1	8	13
All causes	..	..	..	42	9	2	..	1	13	17	20

See Notes on next page.

NOTES ON TABLE IV.

- (a) In this Table all deaths of "residents" occurring in public institutions, whether within or without the district, are included with the other deaths in the columns for the several age groups (columns 2-8). Deaths of "Non-residents" occurring in public institutions in the district are in like manner excluded from columns 2-8 of this Table.
- (b) See note on Table I. as to meaning of "Residents" and "Non-residents," and as to the "Public Institutions" taken into account for the purposes of these tables.
- (c) All deaths occurring in public institutions situate within the district, whether of "Residents" or of "Non-residents," are, in addition to being dealt with as in note (a) entered in the last column of this Table.
- (d) Under the heading of "Diarrhœa" are included deaths certified as from diarrhœa, alone or in combination with some other cause of ill-defined nature; and also deaths certified as from

Epidemic enteritis;
 Zymotic enteritis;
 Epidemic diarrhœa. Summer diarrhœa;
 Dysentery and dysenteric diarrhœa;
 Choleraic diarrhœa, cholera, cholera nostras (in the absence of Asiatic cholera).

Under the heading of "Enteritis" are included those certified as from Gastro-enteritis, Muco-enteritis and Gastric catarrh, unless from information obtained by enquiry from the certifying practitioner or otherwise, the Medical Officer of Health has reason for including such deaths, especially those of infants, under the specific term "Diarrhœa."

Under the headings of "Puerperal Fever," "Phthisis," and "Cancer" are included all the registered deaths from causes comprised within these general terms.

Deaths from diarrhœa secondary to some other well-defined disease are included under the latter.